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ABSTRACT

The social studies unit was written for middle and high school students as well as for gifted/talented elementary students. It covers the process of electing a president. Goals and performance objectives are specified along with a flow chart depicting concepts, generalizations, and skills to be taught over the 2- or 3-week period. This unit will enable the student to: be exposed to the democratic method of selecting candidates to run for the office and of electing a U.S. president every four years; become acquainted with issues involved in political campaigns; be involved in mock conventions, debates, speeches, campaigns and voting; and examine terminology related to the process of electing a president. Several lesson plans are included with information on concepts, objectives, materials, and procedures. Games are then described dealing with past U.S. presidents. A four-page bibliography, which includes names and addresses of organizations which have relevant teaching materials, and several films and slide/tape sets, ends the document. (CL)

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JOURNEY

TO THE

WHITE HOUSE



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Presidential Journey
to the
White House

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The subsequent unit was written specifically for middle and high school students as well as gifted/talented students at the elementary school level. It is adaptable with teacher revisions, however, to elementary level students in the regular classroom.

Since there is no one social studies textbook that devotes sufficient informational material on the process of electing the President of the United States, the writer decided to develop a unit partially based on his prior teaching experience with stated topic at 8th and 12th grade levels and partially based on information gleaned from booklets listed in the bibliography.

Rationale for teaching a unit on electing the President of the United States:
For Adults - parents and principal.

1. To expose students to the democratic method of selecting candidates to run for the office and electing a president of the United States every four years.
2. To acquaint students with issues involved in political campaigns.
3. To involve students completely in simulation such as mock conventions, debates, speeches, campaigns and voting.

For Students

1. To become familiar with the way a United States President is chosen and elected.
2. To examine terminology related to the process of electing a president.
3. To compare the issues and the candidates.
4. To project a winner.
5. To appreciate our form of government.

When the student completes the unit he should have developed the following:

General Understandings:

An effort should be made by the teacher to develop in the students an understanding of the democratic process involved in nominating and electing a President of the United States. Such understanding involves an assimilation of information, studying the issues and platforms, group decision making, debating, discussing, and simulations.

Concepts:

Political convention, caucus, debate, keynote address, nomination, ballot, platform, political parties, propaganda, political cartooning, electoral college, democracy.

Generalizations:

1. Politics play a role in shaping our daily lives as well as our future.
2. In a democracy everyone who is old enough to register to vote has an opportunity to vote for the candidate of his/her choice.
3. Voting rights for women and blacks were established by Constitutional Amendments.

4. Propaganda techniques work to the advantage of politicians.
5. Television News Media is biased.
6. A Cartoonist Caricature ridicules a politician.

Skills

Decision making, organization, leadership, interviewing, listening, debating, public speaking, note taking.

Attitudes:

To learn to work together in a democracy.

To view candidates of each party more objectively.

To appreciate our form of government.

To work within the system to bring about changes for the betterment of society.

Values

To promote civic pride in voting.

To understand that in a democracy everyone's vote counts and that citizens have a "say so" in their government.

Duration of the Unit:

The unit should last two or three weeks depending on the grade level. The following flow chart shows exemplary concepts, generalizations, skills, etc. to be taught.

1st day Springboard - Show a film or slide/tape on electing a U.S. President. Follow up discussion.	2nd day Discuss Political Conventions, debates, primaries, caucuses.	3rd day Demonstrate voter registration. Writing rights, propaganda techniques.	4th day Discuss campaign issues, platforms, cartooning.
5th day Organize groups to plan conventions, debates, voting.	6th day Group progress Reports Discuss: Political parties and electoral college.	7th day Work in centers use taskcards. Small groups and individual.	8th day Discuss election terminology and same main issues in the current campaign
9th day Work on notebook or diary	10th day Work in centers, make final plans for conventions, debates, voting, evaluation.	11th day Design campaign slogans, campaign buttons	12th day Create a new form of U.S. Government. Write a Constitution. Small Groups.

<u>13th day</u> Devise a new way to elect a leader of that Government. Select a new title for that leader.	<u>14th day</u> Invent and play presidential games such as Tic Tac Toe and Concentration.	<u>15th day</u> Everyone select a different former U.S. President. Do research. Justify in a report why he was the best U.S. President. Oral-small groups or written.	<u>16th day</u> A mock Republican Convention in assembly program.
<u>17th day</u> A mock Democrat Convention in assembly program.	<u>18th day</u> A mock presidential debate	<u>19th day</u> Conduct Election. Count votes. Report results to student body, local television, radio, and newspaper.	<u>20th day</u> Final Evaluation

Performance Objectives:

The Student will:

1. Observe the process of selecting and electing a U.S. President by viewing and discussing a film.
2. Discuss Political Conventions, debates, primaries, and caucuses.
3. Demonstrate voter registration, voting rights, and propaganda techniques.
4. Analyze campaign issues and platforms.
5. Sketch political cartoons.
6. Organize groups to plan conventions, a political debate, voter registration, and an election within the school.
7. Report group progress.
8. Assess political parties in the U.S. and electoral college.
9. Utilize task cards while working either individually or in small groups in centers.
10. Explain election terminology.
11. Identify the main issues in the current presidential campaign.
12. Make notebook or diary - small groups or individually.
13. Work in centers finalizing plans for political conventions, debates, and final evaluation.
14. Design campaign slogans and buttons.
15. Create a new form of U.S. Government and write a constitution.
16. Devise a new way to elect a leader of the new government and invent a new title for that leader.

17. Design new party emblems.
18. Compose campaign songs.
19. Invent and play presidential games such as presidential Tic Tac Toe, Presidential Concentration, Name that President.
20. Select a favorite U.S. President and justify why he was the greatest.
21. Conduct a mock Republican Convention.
22. Hold a mock Democrat Convention.
23. Debate the issues.
24. Conduct a mock election, count votes, and report results.
25. Measure results of election unit by means of a final test, notebook/diary progress, group/individual work, motivation of student during the unit.

Introduction of the Unit:

Use one of the films, listed in the bibliography, on selecting and electing a United States President, or use a slide tape presentation you have made as a springboard to introduce the unit. Follow - up with a discussion of the process that occurs every four years.

Sample Divergent Questions:

1. If you were running for president of the United States what would be the major issues of your campaign?
2. If you were setting up a new form of government in the United States, what would you call that form of government and what title would you give its leader?
3. If you could be president of the United States for one day, what would be the first thing you would do?
4. What do you think would be the best way for a presidential candidate to reach the majority of voters, and how should he/she appeal to voters for their votes?
5. How would you expedite voter registration in your community to make sure that every eligible voter is registered to vote?
6. If you could ask each presidential candidate one question, what would it be?

Sample Evaluative Questions:

1. Should the electoral college be abolished? Justify your answer.
2. Select a former U.S. president for an in-depth study. Justify why you believe he was the greatest president of the United States.
3. What qualities constitute your political candidate's eligibility to be elected president of the United States?
4. Show by examples why everyone's vote counts.

A few exemplary lesson plans follow.

Lessons

Mock Democrat and Republican Conventions

Purpose:

To show democracy in action - The process of selecting a candidate for President of the United States.

Concepts:

Convention, keynote address, nominating speech, balloting on nominee, platform.

Objectives:

Conduct a mock Republican Convention.

Hold a mock Democrat Convention.

Materials:

Color guard, U.S. flag, band, sign for each state in the union plus District of Columbia, Guam, Virgin Islands, American Samoa and Puerto Rico. Microphone and podium plus chairs on stage for Platform Committee, chairs in assembly room for student body, campaign banners for candidates of each party posted, campaign hats and badges for platform participants as well as anyone who wishes to wear them.

Procedures:

The program should have been carefully planned and rehearsed by students and teacher. Approximately an hour and a half will be needed for each Political Convention. Every student in the school as well as teachers should be involved two days in assembly. Students not in the program will be seated by state delegations and delegates will be polled by a roving reporter. They will also be called upon to count their vote when the roll call of states is read by the secretary. To begin the program a color guard will bring out the U.S. flag. The student body will give the pledge to the flag which will be followed by the band playing "The National Anthem".

The Order of the Program Consists of the Following:

Call to Order
Presentation of Colors - Color Guard
Pledge to the flag
National Anthem - Band
Roving reporter interviews on the floor
Official call of the Convention-Chairperson
Address of Welcome - Chairperson
Recognition of Officers
Keynote Address
Report of Platform Committee
Roving Reporter
Roll call of states for nomination of president - Secretary
Nomination Speech
Demonstration on Floor
Seconding Speech
Balloting on Nominee
Roving Reporter
Acceptance Speech for Vice-President

Lesson Plan

Information to Include in Student Notebook

Purpose:

1. To become familiar with the entire process of electing a President of the United States.
2. To be familiar with political terminology.

Concepts:

Image, powers, succession, electoral college, alternate, bandwagon, bipartisan, caucus, closed primary, coalition, dark horse, favorite son, floor leader, independent, landslide, majority, mandate, open primary, plank, platform, plurality, polls, referendum, sleeper, split ticket, steam roller, straight ticket, straw vote, war horse, whip, absentee ballot, nominee

Objectives:

1. Define terminology.
2. Identify the major issues of the presidential campaign.
3. Research topics for information.
4. Interpret amendments to the constitution having to do with voting rights.
5. Describe the Executive Branch of Government and the duties of the president delineated in the U.S. Constitution.
6. Write an editorial for the newspaper defending your choice of candidate for U.S. President
7. Predict who the winner will be, in this year's presidential election, based on recent polls
8. Sketch political cartoons.
9. Compare, using political maps, previous presidential elections for the following years: 1948, 1960, 1964, 1968, 1972, 1976, 1980, etc.
10. List several campaign slogans from previous presidential elections.
11. Record electoral votes on a map by states for presidential candidates election night.

Procedures:

Work some in class on date indicated. Student will finish notebook on his own outside class. He may add newspaper and news magazine clippings to the notebook. The notebook will be submitted the last day of the unit to be included in the final evaluation.

Lesson Plan

Designing Campaign Slogans, Emblems and Buttons

Purposes:

1. To study slogans, emblems and buttons from previous predisenal campaigns.
2. To create or design new ones working at the Synthesis level of Bloom's Taxonomy.

Concepts:

slogan, emblem

Objectives:

1. Research slogans of previous presidential campaigns.
2. Relate how Thomas Nast conceived the donkey and elephant emblems to represent the democrat and republican parties.
3. Collect campaign buttons from previous presidential elections.
4. Design new slogans, emblems, and buttons for presidential candidates.

Procedure:

Work individually, in pairs, or in small groups.

Unit Evaluation:

The teacher should evaluate daily the extent to which each student participates in the various assignments, activities, and projects of the unit. Attitudes should be evaluated. The notebook, diary or scrapbook submitted the last day of the unit is also a part of the evaluation. A unit test could also be administered the last day.

Game: Political Concentration

Concentration board with pegs. Hand numbers on the pegs. Underneath the numbers write names of U.S. Presidents and Vice - Presidents. The idea behind the game is to call numbers and match president with vice - president. Two or more students may play the game.

Examples:President

Jimmy Carter
 Ronald Reagan
 Gerald Ford
 Richard Nixon
 Lyndon Johnson
 John F. Kennedy
 Dwight D. Eisenhower
 Harry S. Truman
 Franklin D. Roosevelt
 Herbert Hoover
 Calvin Coolidge
 Woodrow Wilson

Vice - President

Walter Mondale
 George Bush
 Nelson Rockefeller
 Spiro Agnew
 Nelson Rockefeller
 Lyndon Johnson
 Richard Nixon
 Alben Barkley
 Harry Truman
 Charles Curtis
 Charles Dawes
 Thomas Marshall

Questions about the presidents could be asked by the teacher. Two teams of three or four players on each side could be selected to participate in the game, or the students could be divided in the room so that everyone could participate. A bell should be placed on the table or desk in the front of the room. The first player on either team who knows the correct answer should run and tap the bell. Any number of points could be given (5,10) for the correct answer. If a student taps the bell before all of the question is asked and his answer is incorrect, that team could be penalized five points. The team having the most points at the end of the game is the winner.

Questions

1. Served two terms as governor of California. Ronald Reagan
2. He declared "war on poverty". Lyndon Johnson
3. He served as supreme commander of Allied forces during World War II. Dwight Eisenhower
4. He made a decision to use the atomic bomb to end World War II. Harry S. Truman
5. He brought Egypt and Israel to the peace table. Jimmy Carter
6. Author of the Fourteen Points - League of Nations. Woodrow Wilson
7. Famous for saying, "Speak softly and carry a big stick." Theodore Roosevelt
8. Started the "Fireside Chats." Franklin D. Roosevelt
9. Nicknamed "Old Hickory." Andrew Jackson
10. The only son of a president to become president. John Quincy Adams
11. He was the first vice president to become president after the death of the Chief Executive. John Tyler
12. He was the only president whose grandfather was also president. Benjamin Harrison
13. The first president under the organized Republican party. Abraham Lincoln
14. The first president under the organized Democrat party. Andrew Jackson
15. He was called the father of the American Navy. Chester A. Arthur
16. He was called the "father of his country." George Washington
17. He was the only president to be impeached. Andrew Johnson
18. He was elected president for four terms. Franklin D. Roosevelt
19. He served as president for a few months in 1881 and was assassinated. James A. Garfield
20. He was the only president to serve two terms that were not consecutive. Grover Cleveland
21. He founded the Peace Corps. John F. Kennedy
22. He ran under the slogan "Tippecanoe and Tyler Too." William H. Harrison
23. He approved the Compromise of 1850. Millard Fillmore
24. He warned European nations not to interfere in the Western Hemisphere. James Monroe
25. He was the only Speaker of the House to become president. James K. Polk
26. His wife was nicknamed "Lemonade Lucy." Rutherford B. Hayes
27. He proclaimed the Emancipation Proclamation. Abraham Lincoln
28. He was the only man to hold the nation's two top offices without being elected to either. Gerald Ford
29. Author of the Declaration of Independence. Thomas Jefferson
30. The only president to resign from office in disgrace. Richard Nixon
31. On October 11, 1984 a political first in vice presidential debates occurred, although the first vice presidential debate had been held in 1976 between Walter Mondale and Robert Dole. What made the 1984 debate a political first and who were the candidates? Geraldine Ferraro, the first woman vice presidential candidate debated George Bush.
Where did the event take place? Philadelphia.
32. The first television presidential debates, occurred between what two candidates in what year? John F. Kennedy and Richard M. Nixon in 1960
33. Give the name of the city where the first presidential debate between President Reagan and Walter Mondale took place on October 7, 1984. Louisville
Name the city where the second and final TV debate between these two candidates took place on October 21, 1984? Kansas City
34. This president was called "the gipper" by his wife. President Reagan

- 9.
35. Headlines in Newspapers stated that this candidate won but he actually lost the election to the incumbent opponent. Name the candidate who lost. Name the winner and give the year. Thomas E. Dewey, Harry S. Truman, 1948
 36. He issued a pardon to a former president. Gerald Ford
 37. The Louisiana Purchase was acquired under this president's administration. Thomas Jefferson
 38. The youngest president ever to assume the presidency. Theodore Roosevelt
 39. The oldest president ever to be elected to the presidency. Ronald Reagan
 40. When this man became president after the assassination of the president, he belonged to the opposite political party. He was a Democrat and the president who was assassinated was a Republican. Who was he? Andrew Johnson
 41. The Stock Market Crash leading to the Great Depression occurred under this president. Herbert Hoover
 42. Prior to the adoption of the 25th Amendment if the office of vice president was vacated before the end of the president's term of office, it was not filled. The first vice president to fill this office, under the 25th Amendment, when it was vacated was Gerald Ford

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World Book of America's Presidents, two volumes, World Book Co., Inc.

Organizations for Teacher Material:

Democratic National Committee,
1625 Massachusetts Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20036.

League of Women Voters of the United States,
1730 M. Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20036; (free catalogue, publishes Choosing the President, A Guide to Understanding the Political Process. #420, \$5.95).

National Council for the Social Studies,
3615 Wisconsin Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20016; publishes How to Teach the 1984 Election
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teachers (single copies, \$2 each).

Republican National Committee,
310 First Street, SE
Washington, D.C. 20001.

White House Historical Association,
740 Jackson Place, NW
Washington, D.C. 20506; publishes White House History
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Classroom Materials

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Films:

"Elections in the United States" 5S1693 Color 19 Min. \$13.75 - 1976.
Synopsis

How was the right to vote originally conceived? How has it changed
during American history? How are our voting choices determined?

"If Elected---I Promise" 7S 1491 Color 20 Min. \$13.75 - 1976.

Synopsis

This film traces the history of the American presidential campaign and the start of the two party system, including old film clips and actual voices of candidates: Bryan, Stevenson, McKinley, and Wilkie. Also shown are the first campaign ribbons, political cartoons and the elephant and donkey symbols.

"True Story of An Election" OS0453 b and w 58 Min. \$16.05 - 1963.

Synopsis

The purpose of this film is to describe the planning and campaign organization used by a candidate to win an election. The effort, time, and energy with the many people involved in a political campaign are brought together to show democracy in action.

The three films listed above may be rented from the following source:

University of Minnesota
Audio Visual Library Service
3300 University Avenue, S.E.
Minneapolis, Mn 55414

Slide/Tape Set:

Make your own slide/tape set, "Presidential Journey to the White House," to introduce the unit, or with older students let them do their own slide/tape presentation. The slide/tape set could be based on Presidential Posters from Ideal School Supply Co. and/or Beryl Frank's, The Pictorial Histories of the Democratic and Republican Parties.